

UTILIZATION OF WHITE POTATOES¹

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The normal annual crop of potatoes in the United States is about 375 million bushels. As shown in the chart, 86 per cent of the crop is used for table stock and seed. The remaining 14 per cent, 53 million bushels, goes into various feed and industrial uses.

In addition to the potatoes consumed directly as food, an estimated 22 million bushels are used as raw material for food-processing. More potatoes are used for the manufacture of chips than all other food-processing outlets combined. The figure for potato consumption for chips alone in 1947, released after the chart was prepared, was 20 million bushels, as compared with 15 million bushels in 1946.

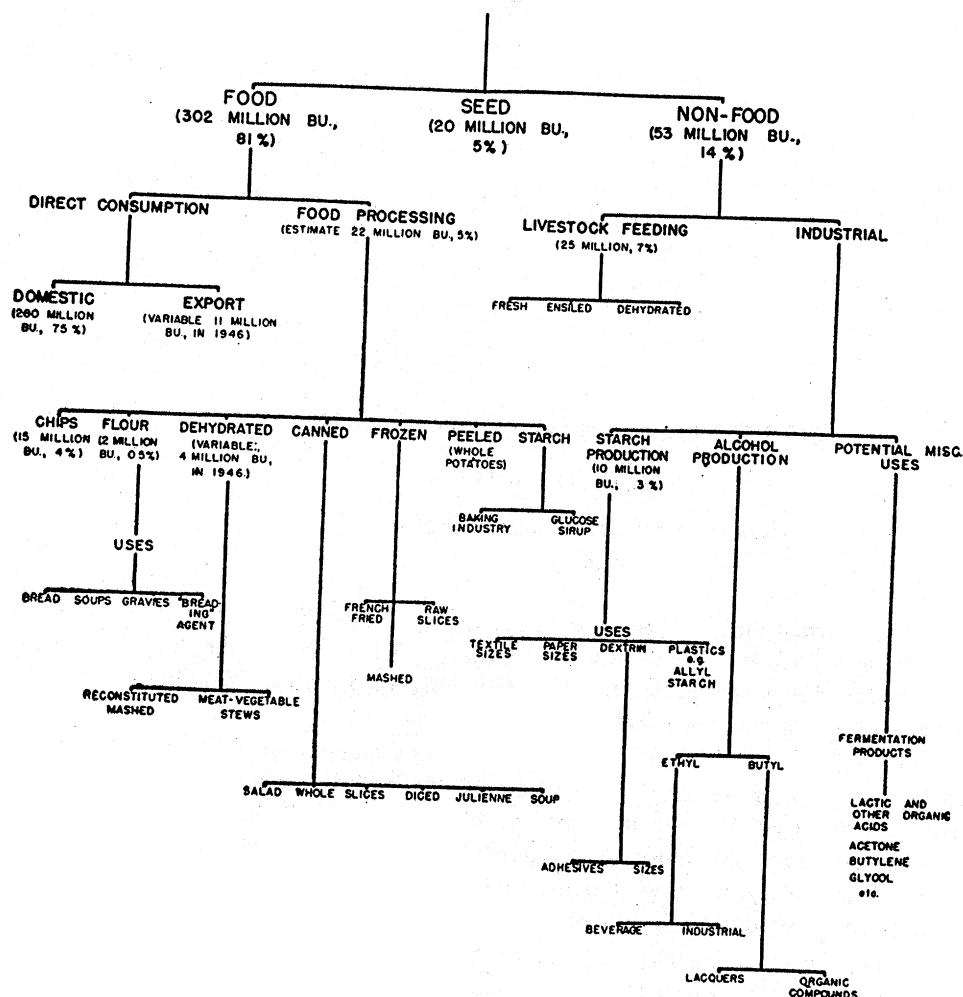
The 2 million bushels of potatoes processed into flour might be considered normal. From 15 to 20 million pounds of flour are produced

¹Report of a study made under the Research and Marketing Act of 1946.

²One of the Laboratories of the Bureau of Agricultural and Industrial Chemistry, Agricultural Research Administration, United States Department of Agriculture.

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NORMAL ANNUAL UNITED STATES CROP, ABOUT 375 MILLION BUSHELS
(QUANTITY OF POTATOES AND PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL PRODUCTION
GOING INTO EACH OUTLET GIVEN WHERE DATA ARE AVAILABLE)



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annually. During the past year, however, the production of potato flour has been increased to several times this amount. This augmented production is being sent largely to France and other European countries as a part of the emergency food program.

The quantity of potatoes used in dehydration for food was more than 20 million bushels in 1943 and 1944. Most of this product was used for the armed forces. This outlet is now stabilized at approximately 4 million bushels—the 1946 figure.

In the non-food uses, livestock feeding is the largest single outlet; 25 million bushels are consumed in this manner each year. Starch production usually occupies the second position, using about 10 million bushels of potatoes annually. Only about 5 per cent of the potato starch is used for food. During some recent years in which we have had surplus potatoes and a scarcity of corn, large amounts of potatoes have been used for alcohol production. This figure was highest in 1946, when more than 29 million bushels of the 1946 crop were processed by distillers. Fewer potatoes however, were used for alcohol during 1947.

The data in the chart were obtained from the Bureau of Agricultural Economics and the Potato Division, Production and Marketing Administration, of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, from the National Potato Chip Institute, and from processors of potatoes in the food and starch industries.

For a more complete discussion of the current situation in utilization of potatoes, readers are referred to the writer's article, "Industrial Utilization of Cull and Surplus Potatoes," which appeared in the November 1947 issue of the American Potato Journal.